Amendments to the Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A sub-system comprising:

at least one passive component; ~~and~~

an identification module for storing component information relating to said at least one passive component[[.]];

a tester interconnected with said at least one passive component;

a processor interconnected with said identification module and said tester, said processor for monitoring with said tester whether a performance characteristic for said passive component is within an acceptable tolerance as specified by said component information stored in said identification module.

Claim 2 (original): The sub-system of claim 1 wherein said component information comprises component identification information, component specifications, and component calibration data.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The sub-system of ~~Claim~~claim 1 further comprising a common interface for said at least one passive component and said identification module.

Claim 4 (original): The sub-system of claim 3 wherein said interface comprises optical or electrical terminals for said at least one passive component and electrical terminals for said identification module.

Claim 5 (original): The sub-system of claim 1 wherein said identification module comprises a non-volatile memory.

Claim 6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (original): The sub-system of claim 5 wherein said non-volatile memory comprises a read-only memory.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The sub-system of claim 7 wherein said identification module further comprises a second memory, said second memory being a read-write memory.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The sub-system of claim 8 wherein said second memory stores historical performance characteristic information relating to said at least one passive component.

Claim 10 (currently amended): Apparatus for monitoring a passive component, comprising:

a non-volatile memory storing specifications for a passive component;

a tester for detecting signals at an input and output of said passive component; and

a processor operatively associated with said non-volatile memory and said tester for monitoring proper whether a performance characteristic of said passive component as detected by

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said tester is within an acceptable tolerance as specified by said specifications stored in said non-volatile memory.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A method for facilitating monitoring of a passive component, comprising:

storing component information for said passive component in a non-volatile memory; [[and]]

installing said non-volatile memory in a sub-system incorporating said passive component;

retrieving specification information for said passive component from said non-volatile memory;

sampling an input signal to and an output signal from said passive component;

determining a performance characteristic for said passive component based on said sampling; and

comparing said performance characteristic with said retrieved specification information to determine whether said performance characteristic is within an acceptable tolerance of said specification information.

Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 11 further comprising configuring a common interface for said passive component and said non-volatile memory.

Claim 13 (canceled)

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Claim 14 (currently amended): The method of claim [[13]]11 further comprising, based on said comparing, selectively generating a warning.

Claim 15 (new): The sub-system of claim 1, wherein said processor is adapted to conduct a trend analysis for said performance characteristic using stored historical performance characteristic information, and in dependence upon said trend analysis, prompt a user to an expected date of failure of said passive component.

Claim 16 (new): The sub-system of claim 15, wherein said passive component comprises a dispersion compensation module (DCM), and said performance characteristic comprises at least one of insertion loss and an average chromatic dispersion value.

Claim 17 (new): The sub-system of claim 1, wherein said processor is adapted to conduct a trend analysis for said performance characteristic using stored historical performance characteristic information, and in dependence upon said trend analysis, recommend a date for re-test of said passive component.

Claim 18 (new): The sub-system of claim 17, wherein said passive component comprises a dispersion compensation module (DCM), and said performance characteristic comprises at least one of insertion loss and an average chromatic dispersion value.

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Claim 19 (new): The method of claim 11, further comprising conducting a trend analysis for said performance characteristic using stored historical performance characteristic information, and in dependence upon said trend analysis, prompting a user to an expected date of failure of said passive component.

Claim 20 (new): The method of claim 19, wherein said passive component comprises a dispersion compensation module (DCM), and said performance characteristic comprises at least one of insertion loss and an average chromatic dispersion value.

Claim 21 (new): The method of claim 11, further comprising conducting a trend analysis for said performance characteristic using stored historical performance characteristic information, and in dependence upon said trend analysis, recommending a date for re-test of said passive component.

Claim 22 (new): The method of claim 21, wherein said passive component comprises a dispersion compensation module (DCM), and said performance characteristic comprises at least one of insertion loss and an average chromatic dispersion value.

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